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HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE NEWS

Meadville woman to go to trial in Mifflin County on labor trafficking charges

A Meadville woman will stand trial in Mifflin County on charges of labor trafficking and involuntary servitude involving four underage girls at a vehicle detailing shop she owns in Lewistown. [Click here](#) to read more.

Gaithersburg man sentenced to 30 years in child sex trafficking case

A Gaithersburg man was sentenced to 30 years in prison after pleading guilty to sexual abuse of a minor and second-degree rape. [Click here](#) to read more.

Peterbilt and Rush Truck Centers Donate \$1.5M raised from last Model 389 to charity

Denton, TX, March 21, 2024 — Today, Peterbilt Motors Company and Rush Truck Centers announced a total of \$1.5M in donations to Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) and Wreaths Across America (WAA). [Click here](#) to read more.

TAT celebrates its birthday at the Mid-America Trucking Show

TAT took the Freedom Drivers Project (FDP) and its 15th birthday party to the Mid-America Trucking Show in Louisville March 21-23 to include the trucking industry in its celebrations.

“We did prize drawings for Retro TAT gear and gift cards, asked people to take photos and do short interviews with us for our birthday, telling us why they’re TATs,” said Heather Fry, TAT Industry Training director.

Fry spoke at the Women in Trucking's (WIT) "Salute to Women Behind the Wheel," manned a booth with TAT materials in the WIT area and did an interview on the Dave Nemo Show. Micah Larsen, TAT's FDP specialist, provided a human trafficking presentation on the last day of the show.

Walmart Transportation sponsored the FDP's presence and provided 28 volunteers from the Walmart Women in Trucking (WIT) drivers, the Walmart Road Team and instructors to help with the exhibit. Four hundred and twenty six people learned about human trafficking by touring the exhibit.



(L to R) Communications Manager Darrah Thomas, Freedom Drivers Project Director Brandy Belton, Industry Training Program Specialist Chris Moreno and Director of Industry Training Heather Fry composed part of the TAT team at this year's Mid-America Trucking Show.



George Marlon from the Walmart Road Team provided educational insights on the exhibits to people touring the Freedom Drivers Project.



Bonnie Brewer, Walmart WIT Team, handed out TAT wallet cards in addition to WIT information at MATS.

UPS and TAT team up for four events in March



At the Ontario UPS Rodeo, UPS drivers spruced up the Freedom Drivers Project after its travels and before tours began.

UPS and TAT teamed up for four events in March, including UPS Rodeos in Goodyear, Arizona and Ontario, California, as well as two Atlanta events, one with youthSpark (another UPS partner), and a UPS SMARTRHub Rodeo. TAT's Freedom Drivers Project (FDP) attended every event, and UPS provided all the needed hauls.

On March 2, 117 employees and family members toured the FDP at the UPS Rodeo in Goodyear, had conversations surrounding the importance of increasing awareness of human trafficking and enjoyed watching the Feeder Drivers showcase their driving skills in competition at the rodeo. In Ontario, California on March 9, another 87 employees and family members visited the exhibit throughout the day of competition.

The FDP then traveled to Georgia and, along with FDP Director Brandy Belton, took part in *youthSpark Drives Change in Fulton County* on March 15. youthSpark, founded initially as the Juvenile Justice Fund in 2000, has a long record of historic Georgia firsts in the fight against child sex trafficking. Both TAT and youthSpark receive funding from The UPS Foundation, and this is the first time the two organizations have collaborated on an event.

Open to the community, this event honored youthSpark's decades-long partnership with the Fulton County Juvenile Court and featured presentations by a number of youthSpark's current partners, including the Fulton County Juvenile Court, Fulton County Sheriff's Office, Clerk's Office, and Solicitor's Office. Belton also spoke, as did youthSpark leadership and Homeland Security Investigations/Human Trafficking Officer Davin Stewart. Of the 80 people in attendance, 69 toured the FDP.



Homeland Security Investigations/Human Trafficking Officer Davin Stewart spoke to teens attending the event about any interactions they might have

The following day, Belton and the FDP joined UPS SMARTRHub employees and Safety Drive for a Cure at their second annual trucking rodeo event, which included both Package and Feeder drivers. One hundred and fifty drivers competed for state championships and to support Safety Driver for a Cure, which sponsored the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation.

"Many drivers came and spoke to me at the FDP, toured the exhibit and even cried while walking out," shared Belton. "With the help of UPS drivers Ryan Ybarra and Al Pedregon, who volunteered at the FDP as well as competed, 135 people toured the exhibit."

California Sexual Assault Investigators Association hosts TAT at training conference

Dylan Wecht, TAT Public Sector Engagement specialist, and Kelley Alsobrook, TAT training specialist, presented at the California Sexual Assault Investigators Association (CSAIA) Spring 2024 Training Conference in Pismo Beach, California on March 13. This is the first time TAT has presented to this organization.

Wecht and Alsobrook conducted a four-hour training for 170 in-person attendees and 28 virtual attendees. Comprised mainly of law enforcement with between one and 20 years experience, the audience also included medical/nursing personnel, prosecutors, parole and probation officers and social services. Audience members received a variety of TAT materials and resources for distribution throughout the state. Additionally, the CSAIA expressed interest in bringing back TAT training at future conferences.

Wecht commented, "This conference brought together sexual assault detectives from all over the state. These detectives are the individuals who have the power to lead demand-focused initiatives within their communities, investigate the rising prevalence of online-based trafficking cases and use the victim-centered approach when building their case and assisting the prosecution in obtaining a conviction."

He continued, "While this group of attendees are not necessarily the ones who are pulling over vehicles or working a beat, they are the ones who take over the investigation, interview the victims and perpetrators, obtain and look through the evidence, work with the prosecution, and, ultimately, have a massive stake in the case at hand. The feedback from the audience was tremendous. In addition to thanking Kelley for her bravery in sharing her story and being a difference-maker, several attendees approached both of us with specific questions about ongoing cases, how to best work with victim advocates and how to guarantee the safety and security of victims in the long-term. Every law enforcement officer has the potential to make a tremendous difference in a victim's life, and it's important for TAT to work with the various levels and sectors of law enforcement as certain training elements will be more relevant to certain groups."

Audience survey results gave the speakers and content between 96-98.9% in every category, with 100% noting that the training met their expectations.



Attendees at the California Sexual Assault Investigators Association (CSAIA) Spring 2024 Training Conference engaged Kelley Alsobrook, TAT training specialist and a survivor, during breaks with comments and questions.

April 3 – Central California Intelligence Center law enforcement training, Sacramento, CA
April 3 – 2024 Healthcare Distribution Alliance Pharmaceutical Cargo Security Coalition Educational seminar, Hanover, NJ
April 5 – Central Illinois Rotary Lunch N Learn, Normal, IL
April 9 – Arizona’s 37th Annual Statewide Transit Conference, Phoenix, AZ
April 10 – Southwest Florida Coalition Against Human Trafficking Regional Partner Meeting, virtual
April 10 – Fleet Safety Council Meeting, virtual
April 10 – Strengthening Sovereign Responses to Sex Trafficking in Indian Country and Alaska Conference, San Francisco, CA
April 10-13 – Transportation Intermediaries Associations Capital Ideas Conference, Phoenix, AZ
April 11 – Trafficking and Transportation follow-up, Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia, virtual
April 13 – Atlas Van Lines van operators, Jacksonville, FL
April 14-18 – Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance Spring Workshop, Louisville, KY
April 16 – Miami-Dade Human Trafficking Task Force, virtual
April 17 – Pennsylvania Moving and Storage Associates Human Trafficking Awareness webinar, virtual
April 18 – Montana Governor’s Human Trafficking Awareness Symposium, Bozeman, MT
April 18-20 – Truck World, Mississauga, ON

April 19 – Louisiana District Attorneys Association law enforcement training, Baton Rouge, LA
April 23 – Mississippi Mixed-Agency law enforcement training, Jackson, MS
April 23 – California Trucking Association Human Trafficking Safety webinar, virtual
April 24 or 25 (TBA) – USPS Chief Logistics Officers Meeting, Las Vegas, NV
April 24 – Marion County Human Trafficking Task Force – Quarterly Meeting, virtual
April 24 – American Trucking Associations Law Enforcement Advisory Board webinar, virtual
April 24-25 – Trans-Bridge Annual Safety Week, virtual
April 29-30 – American Public Transportation Association Mobility Conference and Bus Rodeo, Portland, OR
April 30 – Tribal Voices with Walmart/Sam’s Club, Bentonville, AR
April 30 – Task Force TAT Lunch N Learn webinar, virtual



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